Sermon Notes for Daniel 3:8-18

3:8 **“For this reason at that time certain Chaldeans came forward and brought charges against the Jews.”**

* Who were the Chaldeans? These were the magicians, sorcerers and the wise men who the king of Babylon had used to advise him. They were previously mentioned in (2:2,4). These wise men most likely were not big fans of these three men because of the experience they went through with Daniel and the dream. Even though Daniel was able to have their lives spared, he took all the glory away from them and thereby cost them the ability for advancement in the kingdom.
* This shows the way that man many times repays evil for good. Daniel did good for them, but rather than be grateful they respond with jealousy and anger. A similar situation took place with the Prophet Jeremiah. In 18:20 Jeremiah says that even though he asked God to forgive his adversaries they still conspired against him to discredit him in the eyes of the king. This happens so often, showing how fallen mankind has become.
* Why did the Chaldeans bring these charges? They wanted to seek revenge against the Jews who had made them look bad in the eyes of the king and who had taken the positions of honor in the kingdom that they felt was due to them. This was a perfect opportunity to elevate themselves in the eyes of king while at the same time make the Jews look bad to him.

3:9-11 **“They began to speak and said to Nebuchadnezzar the king: ‘O king, live forever! You, O king, have made a decree that every person who hears the sound of the horn, flute, lyre, trigon, psaltery, and bagpipe, and all kinds of musical instruments, is to fall down and worship the golden statue. But whoever does not fall down and worship shall be thrown into the middle of a furnace of blazing fire.”**

* The Chaldeans spend some time making the charges. First, they restate the king’s edict so that they can make their charges stick up. In repeating this to the king they are showing that they understand what he had ordered and that they were the ones being obedient to it.
* They also reinforce what the punishment will be if anyone chooses not to obey the command. These wise men of the kingdom decide to use their cunning and deceitful ways to get an advantageous position with the king. What we will see next is that they twist things around to make the king become furious with the young men.

3:12 **“There are certain Jews whom you have appointed over the administration of the province of Babylon, namely Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. These men, O king, have disregarded you: they do not serve your gods, nor do they worship the golden statue which you have set up.”**

* In their charges against them they first make the statement that these men had been appointed over the administration of the province of Babylon. As we had said before, this was the largest province in the kingdom and by being in power over it they were the most powerful provincial leaders in the kingdom, answerable only to the king. By reminding the king of this fact the Chaldeans were implying that these men should have a more grateful attitude towards the king, especially since he had put them in such a powerful position despite their humble origins as slaves from a weaker kingdom. By not following the king’s orders, they were being ungrateful.
* Not only were these three men not showing gratitude to the king for his favor, but this high position also made them very powerful in the kingdom. If the king were to allow these men to get away with this behavior without punishment, then this would show the king as being weak. The Chaldeans wanted the king to remember the position he had awarded these men and that they were not providing a good example to the people of how faithful subjects to the king should behave.
* The Chaldeans then begin to bring the formal charges to the king. Their first charge against the king is that these men have disregarded the king. This means that the men have totally ignored the order of the king. In making this accusation, they are planting the seeds of anger in the king. Nebuchadnezzar does not tolerate insolence so this will not go well for the men.
* Secondly the men are charged with not serving the gods of Babylon. This charge would also be something that would make the king angry. By refusing to honor the gods of Babylon these men were basically saying that they had no respect for the culture and values of the kingdom. This would also be viewed as an arrogant attitude towards both the king and the people of the nation.
* Finally, they are charged with refusing to worship the statue. This refusal to worship the statue would be a direct insult to the king himself. So, when we look at these charges made upon the 3 Hebrews by the Chaldeans we see that they are charged as being ungrateful snobs who ignore the king and have no respect for the institutions or the people of Babylon.

3:13 **“Then Nebuchadnezzar in rage and anger gave orders to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego; then these men were brought before the king. Nebuchadnezzar began speaking and said to them, “Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, that you do not serve my gods, nor worship the golden statue that I have set up?**